Business Plan
2016–2017

Department of Seniors

NOVA SCOTIA

Message from the Minister

Nova Scotia values its seniors.

As Nova Scotians reach and surpass the age of 65, they continue to be active in their communities and contribute to the wellbeing of our province. They are employers, employees and small business owners. They are community leaders and organizers. They engage in recreational activities, and care for their friends, families and neighbours. Forty-four per cent volunteer. Older Nova Scotians are a diverse population who represent a valuable source of knowledge and experience to government and to society.

In 2016-2017, the Department of Seniors will engage with our partners across government, in the community, the private sector and with older adults themselves. Together we will work to promote and support older adults to engage in paid or volunteer work. We will create the conditions for older adults to age well in their own homes and communities, and we will help older adults live healthier lives.

Older Nova Scotians contribute a great deal to this province. By recognizing and encouraging the continued participation of our older population in society and the economy, all Nova Scotians will benefit.

Honourable Leo Glavine, Minister
Department of Seniors

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Section I – Department Mandate

The Nova Scotia Department of Seniors works to ensure the inclusion, well-being and independence of older adults in Nova Scotia by providing policy leadership and coordination across government to enable and enhance the participation in and contribution by older adults to all aspects of Nova Scotia life.

On a day-to-day basis our work includes:

- Conducting research and providing policy advice to government on matters related to aging and our aging population;
- Leading, coordinating, and collaborating with departments across government, on the development, implementation and monitoring of policy related to Nova Scotia's aging population
- Engaging stakeholders and creating partnerships to support and enable older adults to age in safe, healthy, and age-friendly communities
- Working with the federal and other provincial governments and other national partners to share knowledge and work together to address issues of common interest related to aging populations.

Section II – Linking to Government's Priorities: People, Innovation, Education

The work of the Department of Seniors aligns with the government priority People with its desired outcome of a population that is growing, productive and thriving. The department particularly contributes to the stated goals of enhancing health and wellness outcomes, and improving communities and social well-being. In its coordination role, in 2016-2017, the work of the department will also contribute to the government's goal of enhancing workforce participation of older workers. The Department of Seniors further works towards the government's Innovation goal of a sustainable, modern government. In 2016-2017, the department will continue to lead and work together with our provincial government partners to ensure an informed, collaborative and coordinated approach to addressing the issues and opportunities that emerge from an aging population.

The term 'seniors' is applied to a segment of the population who share one thing in common: they are aged 65 or more. However, older adults are a diverse population. The experience of aging is highly individual. How we age is influenced by the events and experiences of our lives as well as the intersection of factors such as gender and gender identity, racialization, sexual orientation, immigrant status, ability, socio-economic status, health status and our geographic location.

Older adults contribute much to this province. Nova Scotia seniors have among the highest volunteer rates in Canada with 44 per cent of them engaged in volunteer work. Younger people have higher volunteer rates, however older adults, when they do volunteer, contribute the greatest number of hours. Older adults are also increasingly engaged in recreational and other civic activities and have considerable consumer and economic power, given their numbers.

In 2014, 11.3 per cent of Nova Scotians age 65 and over were in the labour force, with seniors representing nearly four per cent of all employed Nova Scotians. The baby boomers are working longer and an upswing in the number of working Nova Scotians over 65 is expected. Older adults offer considerable experience and knowledge as workers and entrepreneurs. Furthermore, evidence from the OECD shows that when older adults do well in the workforce, the employment of young people is also improved.

Goals and Objectives for 2016-2017

In 2016-2017, the Department of Seniors will work to pursue the goal of enabling and enhancing older Nova Scotians' participation in and contribution to society and the economy. In doing so, the Department will work with all of government to pursue three objectives:

- Recognize, promote and support older adults to engage in paid or volunteer work and participate in the economy.
- Create the conditions for older adults to age in place in their homes and communities.
- Help older adults to live healthier lives.

The complexity and inter-connectedness of the issues and opportunities associated with an aging population mean that an integrated and coordinated approach to government policy and planning in this area is necessary. There are many players within, and outside of government, including older adults themselves who have a role to play in advancing the interests of older adults in Nova Scotia.

In its policy coordination role, and as the central point of contact for seniors' issues in the Nova Scotia government, the Department of Seniors will lead a coordinated effort to ensure that the issues, opportunities and contributions of older Nova Scotians are considered, included and addressed in government decision making.

Priority Activities:

1. The Department of Seniors will work with its partners to support the creation of safe, age-friendly communities and workplaces that enable older adults in all their diversity to participate in the social and economic lives of their communities.

2. The Department will establish a planning, implementation and review mechanism to raise awareness and enable the contribution and participation of older adults in Nova Scotia society and the economy. This mechanism will enable collaboration and coordination among provincial government departments and agencies to ensure that the perspectives, contributions and needs of older adults are considered and included in government decision making.

3. The Department of Seniors will build partnerships with other levels of government, community organizations, academic institutions, the not-for-profit and private sectors and older adults themselves to share knowledge, and work together to address issues and pursue opportunities of common interest that are associated with an aging population.

Performance Measures

The performance measures below reflect the new direction of the department to work with its partners to enable and enhance the participation and contribution of older adults to society and the economy. Specific measures will be developed that appropriately reflect the efforts of each collaboration or activity. Baseline and future targets will be established as the work unfolds.

We will measure our progress by

- The number of provincial government departments and agencies that commit to and that intentionally and actively seek out, consider and incorporate the perspectives, needs and contributions of older adults in the development of policy, programs and legislation of general application well as those targeted at specific populations.

- The number of collaborative efforts to address specific issues and our opportunities that emerge from an aging population.

- Number of communities engaged in age-friendly planning and seniors' safety programming.

- Feedback from stakeholders, including our community partners and older adults themselves as to the impacts of our work

- Success stories emanating from projects, planning initiatives that we have supported or been a part of in some way.

Departmental Expenses Summary

Departmental Expenses Summary
($ thousands)

Programs and Services	2015-2016 Estimate	2015-2016 Forecast	2016-2017 Estimate
Administration	665	689	712
Seniors Initiatives	831	765	886
Total - Departmental Expenses	1,496	1,454	1,598
Ordinary Recoveries	—	—	—
Funded Staff (# of FTEs)			
Department Funded Staff	7.0	6.9	7.0

Note:
For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2
For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1